

THE OMEN



Enters the movie business

WRITTEN BY DAVID AXEL KURTZ PRODUCED BY EVAN SILBERMAN DIRECTED BY NOBODY

MUSIC BY STEPHEN MORTON BASED ON THE NOVEL BY PILKONS AND CLARENDON ART DIRECTOR IAN MCEWEN

TABLE of CONTENTS

For the fourth issue in the 34th Volume of the Omen on March the 23rd in the Year of our Lord 2010

Section HATE

Angry 4

Section SPEAK

Lucky Number 13: Quotulations 5

About Council 5

Community Council Special Election Results 6

Why I Learn German &

Three Languages of Past, Present, and Future 7

Section EMPTY SET

Section LIES

The Towns Where I Was Born 11

Dreadnought: Smile 12

Concerning Dreadnought: Smile 16

David Axel Kurtz is Repetitive 17

Marjorie Sprankle Has a Cankle 18

Some Comics 24

Some More Comics 26



To SUBMIT:

Submissions are due always, constantly, so submit forever. You can submit in rich text or plain text format by CD, Flash Drive, singing telegram, carrier pigeon, paper airplane, Fed-Ex, Pony Express, semaphore or email. Get your submissions to Evan Silberman, Enfield 71A, box 1394, ej07@hampshire.edu.

"I don't understand hip hop."

—Evan "Whitey" Silberman

*Front and back covers,
lame typographical jokes by:
Ian McEwen*

Layout & Editing STAFF

Evan Silberman *SHIFT-JIS*

Stephen Morton *Alphanumeric*

Margaret McGrew *Fuzzy Bunnies*

Ian McEwen *Unicode*

David Axel Kurtz *Character encoding*

Evan Silberman II *Ian McEwen's fap material*

Rachel Ithen *Subjects for Omen Articles*

Ben Batchelder *The Schwa*

omen.hampshire.edu

Volume 34 • Issue 4

March 30th, 2010

EDITORIAL

CRAZY

by Evan Silberman


I've been contemplating writing about my whole mental health deal for the Omen since sometime last year; I don't even remember when it first started seeming like a good idea. It was probably around when David Foster Wallace killed himself. "I might feel fine *now*," I said to myself, "but maybe I'll get successful and write some well-received postmodern novels and be humming along and suddenly somewhere in my mid-40s I won't be able to handle it anymore." It bothered me that someone who had written so lucidly about depression and suicide (and addiction, which is an affliction that I have managed to avoid, thanks more to intense risk-aversion than anything else) would succumb to his disease in so dramatic a fashion as to hang himself in his own home.

But I never sat down to write anything, in part because I was trying to avoid the trap that some of my classmates in Introduction to Writing had fallen into during my first year, which is to say, publishing therapeutic writing. It just struck me as sort of classless. So I finished my second year of school, headed into the summer, started taking

SSRIs, had awful dry mouth for two months, returned for my third year, and you know, life went on.

In the meantime, I decided to start talking about my mental illness like it wasn't a big deal. I sort of felt that if I was casual and not weird about it then maybe I would do my own little bit to remove the stigma of being crazy.

What I was sort of surprised by was how many people responded to me casually mentioning my mental illness by casually mentioning their own mental illnesses. Often they sounded tentative (as I probably did too), like they weren't used to saying anything about the pills they take or the diagnoses they've been given. And I thought that was kind of cool.

So, dudes, it's Hampshire College. A lot of us are afflicted with anxiety, depression, bipolar disorder, ADHD, or some other delightful pathology. I can say from experience that talking about it is better than not talking about it. Share your deep dark secrets, because they're not really that deep and dark. And we all need a little bit more sharing, even the folks who aren't overtly crazy. 

POLICY

The Omen is a biweekly publication that is the world's only example of the consistent application of a straightforward policy: we publish all signed submissions from members of the Hampshire community that are not libelous. Send us your impassioned yet poorly-thought-out rants, self-insertion fan fiction, MS Paint comics, and whiny emo poetry: we'll publish it all, and we're happy to do it. The Omen is about giving you a voice, no matter how little you deserve it. Since its founding in December of 1992 by Stephanie Cole, the Omen has hardly ever missed an issue, making it Hampshire's longest-running publication.

Your Omen submission (you're submitting right now, right?) might not be edited,

and we can't promise any spellchecking either, so any horrendous mistakes are your fault, not ours. We do promise not to insert comical spelling mistakes in submissions to make you look foolish. Your submission must include your real name: an open forum comes with a responsibility to take ownership of your views. (Note: Views expressed in the Omen do not necessarily reflect the views of the Omen editor, the Omen staff, or anyone, anywhere, living or dead.)

The Omen staff consists of whoever shows up for Omen layout, which usually takes place on alternate Friday nights in the basement of Merrill on a computer with an extremely inadequate monitor. You should come. We don't bite. You can find the Omen on other Fridays in Saga, the post office, or on the door of your mod.

The Omen Haiku

Views in the Omen (5)

Do not necessarily (7)

Reflect the staff's views (5)

SECTION HATE

Anger

by Athena Currier



SECTION SPEAK

Lucky Number 13: Quotulations by Maya Marcus-Sells

“We only tolerate nonsexual abuse.”

“I like it when I can be a good person, because it happens so rarely. It helps me hold onto my humanity.”

“If I die, can I write in my will to donate my body to necrophiliacs?”

“Yep, I use penguins for snuggies.”

“Oh shit, there’s still ice in my fucking pants.”

“‘No’ always means ‘yes’.”

“Does ‘yes’ mean ‘no’?”

“I don’t know, I’ve never gotten a ‘yes’.”

“I got a fresh batch of uteri coming in...if you buy one you get one cervix free.”

“It’s like orgasm bandwidth.”

“Magic can cure shit! It doesn’t need to disinfect!”

“Do you abuse drugs?” “Well, I like to snort ibuprofen, does that count?”

“I’d objectify women too, if I was attracted to them; therefore, I’m not sexist.”

“You can’t be nice all the time; that just drains the soul.”

“Boobular attack!” 🙊

About Council submitted by Rob Liota

Community Council is Hampshire College’s student government. Though it had a rocky last term, the newly elected body presents a renewed opportunity for improvement on campus. Please contact ccouncil@hampshire.edu with any questions you may have about Community Council, its sub-committees (FiCom, COCA, COCD, SafeCom), or student projects/policies.

Council meetings are open to the public and take place from 3:30pm to 5:00pm on Tuesdays in the office behind the airport lounge. If you have an item you would like to submit to our agenda, please contact us about it (preferably in detail) at ccouncil@hampshire.edu, and be ready to attend an Agenda Meeting at 9:00pm on Wednesday in the Community Council office, where we discuss how to fit items into the next Community Council meeting.

We will be publishing our meeting minutes on Hampedia at https://hampedia.org/wiki/Community_Council_Meeting_Minutes_-_2010. 🙊

Community Council Special Election Results

We want to thank everyone for voting in this past election. In all there were a total of 241 voters who participated in these special elections. That is a 17.21% voter's turn out rate. As per the decision of Community Council, the names of winning candidates and the percentage of votes they each garnered are being made publicly available. The results of the election are as follows:

Position	Area voters participating	Winning Candidate	Percentage of votes for candidate
Dakin Rep.	45	Zachary Clemente	48.89%
Enfield Rep.	44	Nora Nalle	61.36%
Greenwich Rep.	40	Alex Wenchel	67.50%
Merrill Rep.	26	Vacant	
Off Campus Rep.	48	Fred Concklin	70.83%
Prescott Rep.	38	Robert Liota	81.58%
At-large Rep.	N/A	Maia "Frances" Campbell	30.88%
At-large Rep.	N/A	Grace Ann Gould	29.75%
At-large Rep.	N/A	Michael Evanczuk	21.60%
At-large Rep.	N/A	Madeleine Claire Hahn	17.76%

The Community Council members of Spring 2010 are as follows:

At-large Representatives:

Maia "Frances" Campbell
Dominique "DeeDee" Desir
Michael Evanczuk
Grace Ann Gould
Madeleine Claire Hahn
Ben Saucier

(eat a bag of dicks.)

House Representatives:

Zachary Clemente, Dakin House
Fred Concklin, Off Campus
Robert Liota, Prescott House
Nora Nalle, Enfield House
Alex Wenchel, Greenwich House
(vacant), Merrill House

(it's in parentheses. therefore not said out loud. therefore, it didn't happen.)
(dickbag)

Appointed members (subject to approval by Council as a body):

Maya Berkowitz, SafeCom
Sam Bortle, COCD
Julia Mattes, FiCom
Cyree Johnson, SOURCE
Kalei Sabaratnam, COCA

Staff Members:

Pam Tinto
(vacant)

Faculty Members:

(vacant)
(vacant)

Ex-Officio Appointee:

Josiah Litant



Why I Learn German & Three Languages of Past, Present and Future by Zilong Wang

Before I decided that I will spend my exchange year in Germany, I haven't clearly and consciously realized its value and strategic importance. Now as I read more and more Western classics, I know I have fortunately made the right choice --- study German.

Philosophy, politics, music, society, German intellects dominated almost all these fields in the modern period of western world. As I do my readings, I strongly feel that translation kills. No translation can preserve the original taste of the work. Even the best translation is very far away from the authors intention. In order to best appreciate and critically learn from the masterpieces, I have to read the original work. If I keep working on my German, soon enough I will be enjoying reading "Das Kapital" and "Kritik der reinen Vernunft" in its original flavor.

In ten or twenty years, my children will start to learn to speak. They will grow up trilingual: Chinese, English and German. English is the official language for globalization. It's a must. It's for survival. Most academic papers and the latest news are published in English. The Internet, the computer, the finance and business world, etc. It is also the most efficient way to connect and communicate with the rest of the world. By the way, there are so many great writings and speeches and films in English. An extra perk is that you can find the English translation of other languages' classics pretty easily.

My kids will speak German because it would be my

sin if they miss the fun of brainstorming directly with those greatest masters who shaped the modern world, or, at least the western definition of the modern world. And the kids will learn German "as kids", because learning German grammar is too painful for grown-ups...

Chinese is the language of the future. I am not being nationalist here. First, Chinese is the mother language of nearly a quarter of the world's population. Second, Chinese people has already been recording and exchanging their thoughts in Chinese for more than five thousand years! Think about how much wisdom there is to be discovered in this huge treasure! Third, Chinese intellectual output has been severely oppressed for decades. Now it is coming back. Millions of the world's most energetic and hardworking human being will be writing and debating in Chinese till the day we are all gone. It will be an explosion of expressions! I believe that China, after being the world factories for twenty years, will be producing many of the greatest intellectual work in the coming centuries. How can I left my next generation out of the game?

I am so grateful that my mother language is Chinese. I'm also grateful that I have the chance to study English and German, without too much pain. Sooner or later, I will work to share this privilege, to make these languages accessible to anyone who is wise or lucky enough to take on them. 🙏

SECTION LIES

The Towns Where I Was Born

by David Axel Kurtz

I was never much of a Kennebunk kid despite growing up in Kennebunk. There are legion reasons for this. I lived just off the beach, which nobody does who is both in Maine and in their right mind at the same time. I had no car. I didn't even have a cell phone until senior year. My high school was forty miles away from Kennebunk High, removing me from the necessity of familiarity.

Also, I was a nerdy, reclusive bastard. A perfect storm of isolation, and one to which I had very few objections.

But from time to time I find myself drawn into the Kennebunk world. Always with just the hint that I belong there, that I am returning from a long absence, that this is where I ought naturally to be.

On my most recent return to my absconded homeland I was interested to observe that there are now two Kennebunks. The first is made of the people who live here, who will likely continue to live here well down to time. That Kennebunk is always here. The second is made up of the people currently off at college, and it exists only during school holidays, when the boys are back in town.

The first Kennebunk has had plenty of time to grow into itself. It has well adapted. It knows its business. It now lives quite firmly at a particular local bar (Federal Jack's, for those of you who are interested). It has made it its own, like the Athenians to the Parthenon, Yeats and Dowson to the Cheshire Cheese, Papillon his cell, ad plenum.

The second has had less time to evolve as a single organism, its life so often interrupted by the demands of semesters and study. So it still behaves as it did in high school.

I discovered this last night when Hrothgar and I tried to go to a bar to get a drink. The first bar we tried was lastcalled at 1030. Only one option thus remained to us. So we went to Fed's, and though it was still serving,

I found that between Alcohol and Me there was an unfortunate impediment in the form of My Entire Middle School. Comma, wasted.

Misanthropic bastard that I am, and not yet prepared for the slings and arrows of outrageous reunioning, I decided I would rather gargle asphalt chunks from the road below than wade into such a mass of messy humanity. Hrothgar agreed that we should look about us for some less excruciating way to draw a drink.

We ended up calling Fappy, which concluded with us, as we knew it would, ending up at a Party.

It was at the house of one of the Perkleton Thugs. It was in the suburbs. It was within walking distance of Kennebunk High. The Parent's Weren't Home. So it was in a house, people standing in the kitchen between the refrigerator and the shiny wood cabinets, or down in the little basement in the big couch on the big carpet in front of the big TV.

It was like high school. Except with slightly more facial hair.

Each of these people, I was sure, had grown up a great deal since high school. As individuals they had gone off and moved on and matured and no few of them matriculated too. Yet as a group they had not had much chance to progress. Just a few weekends, here and there, spread out over near four years of collegiate reprobation. As a group, then, they might as well have been a month after graduation, still smoking High School out of their system and wondering nervously about the Present and its myriad.

So we stood there and drank and we chatted and stank and we giggled and smalltalked and beer. For what else we had as a flavor or fad we could not make use of it here. And we all met each other's eyes to make sure we were recognized, to see there that we still were who we were. There was a might to our repose, fraught with the tension that

we'd chose to make ourselves all homeless, disinterred.

I thought it was particularly telling when, sitting in the basement with a few people, I was suddenly joined by the entirety of the party from upstairs. They were carrying all the alcohol that we had. "Now it's a party, at least," I thought aloud. But alas that it was not to be.

"The cops," I heard whispered. "The cops." "The cops!"

"The cops are here?"

"Be quiet – cops!"

So quiet we were, and silent, and still, just hiding there with the booze hidden under the table or clutched whiteknuckled to our chests.

We listened for the sounds of approaching jackboots. We waited in hard tension for our fate.

Then, "You know guys," said I, but was cut off.

"SHHH!" assailed me. Don't you know? "The cops!"

"But we're not doing anything illegal," I said.

Silence.

We were all over 21. We were drinking, sure. Our beer. In a private home. To which we had been invited by an adult who lived there. Or at least who did during school vacations.

Silence.

Slowly the party drifted back upstairs and returned to its appropriate head of froth. There were no cops. Not that, of course, it mattered. There was tension in the rooms, but not that which exists between miscreants and those who've come to arrest them. The tension, if I may be so bold, was between us and us – or rather, the fear that there was tension between them – which would mean, therefore, that the two were not the same.

That we in this group were not ourselves. That this was no longer who we were. That the whole was less than the sum of its parts. That we could go home – but didn't want to?

I left soon thereafter. 🧐

Omen Gnome in Hiding by Jackie Micheller

I am located in the underbelly of the beast, and by beast, I mean a chunk of metal formed into what I can only assume is a failed pinwheel.

As always, if you find the Omen Gnome, submit a picture of you with the gnome and rehide it! Don't keep it because that is mean. Once hidden, submit your clues as well as the location of the gnome in plain English to ejs07@hampshire.edu



in this space,
feel free to create your own lies,
speaks,
hate,
slander,
re-radicalized panegyrics,
starcraft references,
uncolored anti-anti-colored folk-songs,
and post-Leftonian anti-smoking binges.

then get comfortably outraged.

the omen loves you.

Dearest WordArt,

I have found you yet again.

**You are wasted on the weak
and those in 3rd grade.**

I feel for your misfortune
but know not what to do.

Microsoft

For you are a foolish product of your master

I wish you were given
the
respect of clippy.

For even you
are more professional.

Best wishes for your future,

Alex Wenche

Tasty Tasty Tasty

by Ben Batchelder



Ivan Petrovitch Pavlov (who I am not)

“‘Loquacious’ was the name of one of the black characters in one of my screenplays” - Ben Batchelder

“I’m at the combination Pizza Hut and Taco Bell”
- Evarcorton

“eat a bag of dicks” - a bag of dicks

At the end of the day, in the cosmic sense, once all the options are weighed in, is there anything better than a tasty, tasty milkshake? I know the answer, but I’ll give you a few minutes to guess.

The answer is no.

I’m not just mentioning this to make your mouths water. Who do you think I am? Pavlov? No. At Hampshire College’s Bridge Cafe, for those of you who live under rocks (probably because there are no rooms left) three US dollars can buy you 16 fluid ounces of blissful dairy.

f’REAL! That’s what they’re called. Their title suggests that, in the Hampshire spirit, the school’s administration has said “No, sir!” to the corporate stranglehold on our consumeristic lives, and opted for only all-natural food-stuffs for our student body.

It’s not true. They come from a factory in California. One of the ingredients, playfully named Carrageenan, sits oh-so naturally between Guar Gum and Yellow #5.

But far be it from me to be a Negative Nancy. Let’s look on the bright side. The whole f’REAL! experience is designed for your consumer pleasure, from the delightful messages under the foil (most of which are about f’REAL! brand milkshakes) to the Fun Milkshake Machine, installed directly to the left of the cookie bazaar. You are permitted to select your own thickness of milkshake. I have not tried “Less Thick” or “Regular Thickness,” because they are in violation of my moral fiber. Not that discriminate. Some of my best friends drink Regular. But Less is for pussies, and if you drink Less Thick, you’re getting Less out of your milkshake. That’s how I remember.

“But the thick ones are so hard to drink!” the pussies will moan. “It takes too long to get through the straw!” Those people are vaginas. I hate them.

I don’t know what takes place in the bowels of that Milkshake Machine, but it transforms an unthawed hunk of ice cream and Carrageenan into a tasty, tasty, tasty frozen drink. So buy one.



Dreadnought : Smile

by David Axel Kurtz

In the days of sail, a ship was as a kingdom unto itself. It might sail for months without so much as sighting land. It might be stationed a thousand miles from the nearest city, ship, or person. It had to be food, water, and shelter for its crew; the crew butcher, baker, candlestick-maker; the captain judge, jury, and executioner. No nation in all its breadth has ever been so completely self-sufficient as was the one hundred and twenty feet of the Golden Hind.

This was no less true concerning a ship of war, her armaments, and thus her role in combat. A ship of the line would necessarily be equipped with the largest guns possible for firing at the greatest possible range, as well as smaller guns for close-quarters combat and individual firearms for the close repelling of boarders. As technology progressed it became possible to have substantive differences between the guns used aboard a ship. The HMS Royal Sovereign (commissioned 1892) had an armament of four 13.5" long guns, ten 6" guns short guns, sixteen 6-pounders naval guns, and twelve 3-pounder light guns. These would allow the ship to engage in symmetric combat with other capital ships, escort ships, small boats, and boarding craft, respectively.

It is generally regarded that such ships were rendered instantly and utterly obsolete by the introduction, by the British, of the HMS Dreadnought in 1906. It lent its name to an entire concept of shipbuilding; not just a class, but rather an entire variety of warship. All capital ships manufactured by the British prior to this have been relegated by history to the category "predreadnoughts." Such ships built subsequently by other Great Powers were obsolete before their keels were laid.

The primary difference between the predreadnought, as exemplified by the Royal Sovereign, and the Dreadnought and ships which followed her example, lay in the variety of her armament, and thus of combat roles which she could perform. HMS Dreadnought was armed with only one variety of naval gun: the 12" gun, designed for the long-range distribution of destruction. She had ten of these guns, designed so that eight could be brought to bare at any target regardless of its position relative to her. The christening Champagne rushing down her bow swept away the notion of the broadside, as surely as the heated water of the Vickers Gun washed the cavalry charge out onto the fields of Flanders.

She was incapable of performing many of the feats of the Royal Sovereign. She could not engage an enemy at close range. She could not use a modicum of force, being capable of delivering only massive shells (even when her uniform firing-control was disabled). She was not equipped for providing saturation fire, rather for delivering single-point fire of great penetrative and destructive power. She was not designed to repel boarders, to eliminate torpedo boats or other fast attack craft, to harass submarines, to perform any task but the delivery of concentrated force at other enemy ships and centralized coastal defense emplacements. Her abilities and her role, though narrow, were as one.

The deprioritization of these combat roles allowed her to shed herself of all weaponry not directly related to her primary mission. This allowed her, not only to increase the size of the arsenal she committed thereto, but also to increase the amount of equipment she dedicated to both speed and defense, making her more able to reach a combat zone, and once there, able to survive longer, in each instance delivering more firepower, and therefore being of increased effectiveness in her role.

The Dreadnought did not render these other roles obsolete. Indeed the threat of submarines and torpedo boats was only growing, not the least of which due to the great concentration of power, easily targeted, which the dreadnoughts represented. Such ships made necessary the transfer of such capabilities, and the tools for their effecting, to other ships, most notably the destroyer and the many variants of the cruiser. These ships were tasked with the destruction

of smaller ships as well as engaging ships of their own size and class – in short, with the protection of the dreadnoughts. They were as committed to their particular roles as were the dreadnoughts to their own, and neither could have successfully completed their roles without the other.

Thus, where one ship was (in 1890) able to perform many roles by itself, by 1910 it might take four ships to accomplish all of these roles. However, by this judicious division of specialty, those four ships would prove a more effective unit than any four of their multipurpose predecessors. This new whole, to abuse the phrase, was far superior to the sum of its parts.

Such specialization would likely have been impracticable much before the concept of the dreadnought was imagined. Even one hundred years previously, the number of ships at sea would not have allowed them to move in a flotilla, reducing to a quarter – if not more – the number of fighting units on the high seas. This would have resulted in an unavoidable reduction of the amount of sea able to be patrolled by a given nation by three quarters at least. Likewise the technological sophistication of cannon-makers did not allow for substantive differentiation between ships based on armament; the abilities of a 112-gun first-rate ship-of-the-line, and a 60-gun fourth-rate warship, were, if not equivalent, then certainly comparable. They are all of the same species, though one be larger and more powerful than the other. The differentiation of role necessitated between a ship of 15” guns, able to fire 25 miles, and a ship of 6” guns, able to fire only 5 miles, and whose shells would likely not even pierce the armor of a dreadnought, is far less subject to misunderstanding. They are not ships of the same species; the taxonomic tree would have to be climbed high before their common ancestor was to be found.

It is not only in warships that technological innovation must precede the efficient allocation thereof. In the case of the pin-maker, the example posited so famously by Adam Smith (unlike these naval exemplar, which are due to the scholarship of Robert K. Massie), the productivity of four men, each responsible for the assembly of one part of a pin, far exceeds that of four pin-makers each responsible for the item’s complete construction.

Yet this managerial idea, the division of labor, would not have been practicable under all circumstances. In the middle ages, when a town might only be able to afford

putting one person to the trade of pin-maker, being hard-pressed perhaps to keep him in sufficient work, the use of four such people towards this end (and the use of all the pins their efficient laboring would produce) might have been both undesirable and unsupportable. The human unit, as a unit of labor, in any capacity, is indivisible, in a way which is perhaps difficult to comprehend to those who live among modern, technologically-assisted workers. The ability for these premodern workers to expand the potential market for their goods was as important a precursor to their engagement in efficiently divided labor as was the total population who might support their industry, such as by having demand for their product.

In the same way, the use of the division of labor seen as a result of the introduction of dreadnoughts to the navies of the world might not have been practicable in previous times. The total population of ships, the indivisible unit of the seafaring world, had to be sufficient to support such a division. If Britain had in 1900 been considering threats, not from a handful of easily-dominated naval powers all located in the same general portion of the world, but rather by a number of serious competitors spread across the globe, the launching of the Dreadnought might have been, rather than a success, an inefficient allocation of resources; thus, a strategic blunder.

As it was the strategic situation in which England found itself in the years leading up to the Great War allow its introduction of the tactical abilities of the Dreadnought to great and well-deserved acclaim. So too did the concept of the all-big-gun battleship remain the most efficient allocation of naval resources for generations of ships, until technological innovations (such as the airplane and the missile) rendered even the concept of the battleship tactically impracticable, leading to a further division of labor as countries rushed to adapt to the new situation – the definition of evolution.

An illustrative comparison might be made between the evolution of the dreadnought and the evolution of political roles in countries with a republican form of government. To this end, I propose the analogy: PREDREADNOUGHT:DREADNOUGHT::STATESMAN:CANDIDATE – or, if you prefer, VARIED GUN:ALL BIG GUN::PLENIPOTENTIARY:SMILE.

In times past, the role of an official elected to this nation’s highest offices was to be a strong leader, an attractive candidate, an intelligent arbiter, an effective and

The Omen XXXIV + IV - Return of the Omen
efficient administrator, in all ways a statesman. He was expected to possess all the qualities such work required: courage, wisdom, perspicacity, morality. In many ways his attractiveness as a candidate was one of his least important attributes. The absence of the internet, of television, of telephones, of movies, even of radio and photography, allowed a candidate to ignore the failings of body which would present a modern candidate with serious, perhaps insurmountable difficulty. In the age of instant transmission of information and the easy creation of information in a number of media, William Howard Taft would have had to focus far more of his attentions than he did on his caloric consumption. To say nothing of the difficulties Franklin Delano Roosevelt would have felt in trying to run for office from a wheel chair.

These limitations in communication likewise made the self-sufficiency of a candidate far less dispensable than it is in the modern day. An elected official was expected to make decisions without receiving complete information, without being able to quickly consult advisors or other members of the community, without at times being able to request instructions from those superior to himself. An ambassador was forced to be extraordinary and plenipotentiary when it might take months for their orders to be confirmed or denied by their governments at home. A modern ambassador, able to check his behavior with his superiors even before he acts, is neither extraordinary nor plenipotentiary. An ambassador would have to establish his embassy on a different planet to enjoy the sort of independence enjoyed by an ambassador in the days before television, telephone and telegraph.

A representative to a seat of government, such as a senator, congressperson, delegate, member of parliament, &c, was likewise required to be self-sufficient. Though they might have remained in their home countries, they might still have been removed from their constituents by an information gap of days, if not weeks. Such offices, moreover, due to the powers of self-sufficiency with which it was necessary for a constituency to invest them, were substantively more powerful than they are today. The office of President of the United States does now carry in many ways less power than did the office of Mayor, or even Sherif, in a small town during the youth of this country.

It ought then to come as no surprise that the modern holders of these offices are not the statesmen that they

once were. These new office-holders, now allowed to be of any gender, are not required nor expected to exercise plenipotentiary authority. Their constituency would not only object to such actions, they would do so loudly, immediately, and effectively. This ability to receive instant input is not limited to a voting body, but might also be applied to a selected team of advisors answerable directly to the office-holder. Where once a statesman may have had to devote a fraction of their time and abilities to every role they were required to play, now they may delegate these roles as specifically as their ability to afford competent labor allows. They might let the small guns devolve onto smaller ships, keeping the big guns for themselves, useful for attacking only other capitol ships – that is to say, other holders of office.

This division of labor allows the office-holder to devote their time entirely to one particular role. By virtue of the necessities of the situation, in a republican democracy, that role is inevitably that of candidate. A modern candidate is thus not required to be, nor rewarded for being, a statesman in the traditional sense. A modern candidate is rewarded much more directly for being a handshake, a hairdo, and a smile. This both on the intrinsic merits of these characteristics, as judged by their ability to garner votes, as well as in their direct comparison to other candidates, they being as ships of an equivalent class and role.

In a world in which candidates are all-big-gun battle-ships, it is foolhardy indeed to underestimate the importance of those who have taken upon the roles they have abandoned. I refer to the cruisers and destroyers of the modern world: the fundraisers, the policy wonks, the campaign managers, the volunteer coordinators, and all the other components of a modern political machine. A candidate's power and effectiveness might be measured by the power and effectiveness of their entire flotilla, working as one to protect and support the flagship; the combined effectiveness of these smaller ships might be estimated based upon their total number, for the size of a politician's entourage is rarely anything but directly proportional to the influence they command.

One can therefore appreciate the development of candidates whose primary obligation is to be electable to office, rather than competent in office, is a demonstration of adaptive evolution as clear as that of the dreadnought and destroyer. Further, it is little surprise that the idea of the

'great statesman' is becoming as untenable as the idea of the 'great battleship,' the superdreadnought, has likewise become. The modern candidate is best served, not by acting as the representative of a given district, but rather as a cog in a great party machine, himself and his adjuncts but specialized parts of a larger and more complex whole. In this way their labor might be greater than the sum of their parts, creating a functioning political force as superior to an individual's cruse as a battlefleet was to a simple sortie or patrol. It might therefore accomplish more, attack farther and more effectively, move faster, respond more quickly, to the point where any opposition would have to comport itself similarly in order to compete with any degree of effectiveness. Moreover, as the prowess of political attacks has advanced so much faster than the ability of a candidate to withstand them, just as the thickness of armor was made inconsequential by the development of stealth torpedoes, guided missiles, penetrating bombs, and every combination thereof, so too might this further division of labor allow for the easier abandoning of a damaged ship, so as not to upset the course of the fleet at large.

-Amherst, 2010

This article was inspired more than anything else by six sources: Robert K. Massie, Adam Smith, Charles Darwin, Henry Kissinger, Avi Halaby, and Mark Hagen. That is to say: Dreadnought, An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations, On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, authors@google talks, Cryptonomicon, and Mark's answering machine. Respectively.

Information concerning the history and development of naval technology in the lead-up to the Great War came from Dreadnought, one of the most comprehensive and enjoyable history books I have yet come across. My novellette The Lord and Master was also much inspired by this work; as I am about to begin reading the sequel, Castles of Steel, I can only imagine that I shall remain insufferable on this subject for at least a few more days to come. (Also on related subjects. Like Winston Churchill!)

Doctor Kissinger provoked this sea-train of analogies with his statement, while being interviewed through the authors@google series, that no modern candidate would ever do something so silly as actually study the issues himself. He was being flippant, but not, I expect, very far from serious. If Nixon was the battleship, it is worth remembering that Kissinger was a battlecruiser that was often called upon to take point ahead of the flagship.

Ideas concerning the division of labor came from The Wealth of Nations, or at least those parts of it which are not composed of more tables than a furniture warehouse.

Ideas concerning evolution as the result of adaptation came from studying The Origin of Species - although I must say my understanding of such ideas are owed as much to Tom Wolfe for I am Charlotte Simmons, and Lee Van Valen for A New Evolutionary Law (the "Red Queen" article).

Cryptonomicon - besides providing me my motivations in most every venture I undertake - deserves special mention in the same breath as Mark's voicemail. Let me explain:

Concerning Dreadnought: Smile by David Axel Kurtz

I had finished reading Dreadnought on Sunday. It was the subsequent Friday and I was streaming the Kissinger google-talk while eating breakfast. Some few hours later I ended up at the gym, up on an elliptical machine, where my endorphin-addled mind is given liberty to wander as it wants.

About fifteen minutes into my exercise routine, I suddenly stumbled off the machine, grabbed my phone, and made my way to the door. I went outside, standing in the snow, and left Mark the following voicemail:

"I AM CHANNELING THE BAD SHIT! The power is coming down from On High. Today it happens to be coming down through me - you poor bastard. I just stumbled off the elliptical, because I thought of this, and since intuition, like flash of lighting, lasts only for a second, you need to write this down and tell it back to me later when I'm not high on endorphins and covered in sweat. Here, take this down: DREADNOUGHT IS TO DESTROYER AS CANDIDATE IS TO HIRED JEW. OK. Back to workout. Call me. Lates."

Which, for those of you keeping score, is a double-cryptroll - pages 27 and 763, to be precise.

I may not footnote others, but damned if I don't footnote myself :)

Dear The Omen,

Howdy, howdy.

As the submission about the milkshakes is my first submission to your fine publication, I would like to add, "thanks for the pizza." I asked Evan if I could have a slice and he said, "OK!" So there you go. The Omen has heart and the Climax doesn't. Everybody knows it.

In any event,
Ben Batchelder



David Axel Kurtz is Repetitive
by David Axel Kurtz

HAMPSTERS!



to come check out

THE THUNDERCURRENT EXPRESS

being the writings of your very own

david axel kurtz

warspite.wordpress.com

GOD SAVE THE KING

Marjorie Sprankle Has a Cankle

A (failed) (NaNoWriMo 2009) novel
by Daniel Clarendon and Alyssa Pilkons

Chapter 18:

Love, Doggie-Style

Running is hard with a basset hound around one's waist, but Robert Finkle ran nonetheless. He ran, he hopped, he somersaulted, he pirouetted, but Marcie would not detach herself no matter what acrobatic maneuver he tried.

"Walter, get this damn pooch off of me!"

But Walter did not hear, so busy was he weeping over the framed photo of Marcie he kept over his toilet. He couldn't help his mind from replaying memories of some of their happiest times. The time when Walter threw the frisbee and Marcie stared at him. The time when Walter ran through the surf and Marcie stared at him. The time when Walter retrieved the newspaper in his mouth and Marcie stared at him. The time when Walter had his checkup at the vet and Marcie stared at him.

"Women have broken my heart before," Walter wailed, "but never into so many pieces!"

Marcie, for her part, was enjoying the ride.

Yeah, boss, she thought, let's bust this joint. Let's elope. Palm Springs is lovely this time of year. Or maybe Rio. Or Omaha.

But Robert wasn't running to any of those places: he was running to hell, or at least, the canine version of hell.

Chapter 19:

What Violent Dreams May Come

As Mortimer Pinkle napped, he dreamt. He dreamt his name was Vibuzzio and he was a mob boss, and he was busting caps right and left.

"Sir, forgive me," a minion said. "I don't have the money." Blam! Dead.

"Sir, forgive me," another said. "I slept with your

daughter." Blam! Dead.

"Sir, forgive me," another said. "We ran out of meatballs." Blam blam! Double dead.

Mortimer was liking this new persona. "I a-like a-this per-s0oo-na," he said in his best Italian accent. "Parmesan-o. Riga-to-ni. Boyardee." He never knew he could speak Italian so well.

Suddenly, the three men he just cut down all came back to life, all in the form of Petunia Dinkle. Yet they all kept a remnant of their former selves. Therefore, one Petunia had a five-o'clock shadow. Another had slicked back hair. The third had ear hair.

The Petunias turned toward him with fire in their eyes. "Refuse to help us, did you? Well! Well, well, well." They took out Uzis—or some other type of really big, scary gun.

"A-please!" he begged, "don't a-murder me. I will do whatever you a-want! Presto! Grazie! Tortell-eee-ni!"

But it was too late. They opened fire, and right before the bullets riddled his \$10,000 suit, he woke up.

Phew, he thought. Time for some green tea.

Soon he would find himself dead in the waking world, too.

Chapter 20:

Rotnacht

Tomatoes do not like to be put in quiches. They do not like to be put in pizzas. They do not like to be put into omelettes. But what they just cannot tolerate is to be cooked in Xpress Redi-Set-Go ovens. If you have to cook a tomato, the standard line of thinking went, at least have the decency to do so in a real oven—not something from the QVC.

This is why they leapt off the shelves in the study when Marjorie Sprankle walked in, with a certain pep in her step, so happy was she in the re-discovery of her

cankle. (For without cankles, who are we, really? Do we even exist? What is the meaning of a cankleless life? Does God, too, have a cankle? Does Cathy Mitchell? Are those even separate questions?)

The first tomato landed on her foot, the dentures clumped on the toe of her shoe. She looked down in surprise, unaware that this tomato at her foot was just the vanguard of an all-out attack, a total blitzkrieg. It would later be referred to as Rotnacht ("Red Night"), or it would be, at least, by the residents of the nearby Little Germany area of the city.

Within mere moments, the tomatoes were flying down like the hail of hellfire. Not only was it insulting enough to be splattered by the juicy tomato pulp of these kamikaze vegetable-fruit-things, but the dentures stung as their fake teeth hit Marjorie's flesh.

"Enough!" she screamed over the splattery din.

Marjorie Sprankle had a secret, in addition for her love of David Hasselhoff. She was also a black belt in about seven types of martial arts. (How else could she have executed such a perfect roundhouse kick earlier that day?) So she began making sauce of the tomatoes with well-placed jabs, kicks, slices, uppercuts, and eye-pokes. Her hands and feet moved in a blur, decimating any tomato in their path. And not even all the Fixodent in the world could have stopped the denture obliteration.

Unfortunately, she did not see Eleanor Finkle watching her from the doorway. Not even all of the Fixodent in the world could have kept Eleanor's dentures from falling out as she stood slack-jawed, watching the carnage.

"BFF-ship over!" she yelled in her hysteria. "You have slaughtered my friends! Prepare to suffer the consequences, bitch!"

Chapter 21:

She wasn't born with it – it had to be the cabbage soup

Petunia's cow Maybelline was named after Petunia's great aunt Maybel, and Petunia's great uncle who was named, quite unfortunately, Line. Maybel and Line purchased the cow for little Petunia Dinkle when she was

just twelve years old as an Easter gift. Maybelline was a chunky little calf, and Petunia Dinkle did not like her pets, as she did not like her friends, to be chunky. She immediately put young Maybelline on a cabbage soup diet. As soon as Maybelline was thin, Petunia fell in love.

Petunia Dinkle and Maybelline Dinkle went on many adventures together. They went to the hair salon. They went speed boat racing. They even went to the 47th Annual Guess Who Championship together. They became the best of friends.

Of course, when Petunia Dinkle turned 14 she hit puberty. And everything changed. Suddenly she didn't want to hang out with a cow anymore. Suddenly she wanted to kiss boys, and have "intercourse." She wanted to gossip maliciously with her friends and frienemies. She wanted to watch My Super Sweet Sixteen and One Tree Hill on TV. Unfortunately, Petunia Dinkle went through an awkward stage at 14. She wasn't chunky, but she was ugly. And I'm not even talking a little ugly. No, at 14 Petunia Dinkle was one hideous beast. No boys wanted to kiss her, and no girls wanted to be her friend. And her parents did not even own a TV. No, Petunia Dinkle's dreams were crushed, and all she had was a stupid cow, who frankly, she realized in horror, seemed to be putting on some weight.

But Maybelline wasn't failing Petunia in the least now, and she was beginning to think a cow was perhaps the best friend a woman could have.

Chapter 22:

Is that your final butt clench?

As Mortimer Pinkle sipped his tea, an urge to exercise came upon him. Mortimer Pinkle was not the type to have urges. Of course, he knew that in having an urge his yin and yang must be completely out of chi. He gently placed down his mug and began to stretch. Slowly, gently, he did 10 lunges on each side. Then, from the very bottom of his oversize underwear drawer, Mortimer Pinkle pulled out his prized possession. Something he had purchased long, long ago, at a vintage shop in Kentucky. Something he thought about frequently, but used only on the rarest of occasions. But today, it was time. And so, Mortimer

Pinkle pulled out his Regis Philbin workout tape.

Chapter 23:

And they ran.

Marjorie Sprankle took one last loving look at her cankle, and then she ran. She ran without care, without thought of destination of what person, or vegetable, might be following her. Carrots came at her like arrows, turnips like bullets, and leeks, well, they still looked like leeks, but they were flying towards her at alarming speed. Marjorie Sprankle made a mental note that if her and Eleanor became BFFs again, to recommend Eleanor get a Hampshire College farm share to save money and to receive less hostile and more organic produce. But for now she was running. Fast.

Robert Finkle was also running. However, the thing Robert Finkle was running from was still attached to his waist. Robert Finkle was beginning to realize that his running was hopeless. That no matter how fast he might run he would have a basset hound attached to his body for the rest of his life. But still he ran. He ran and ran and ran. Then he stopped at the local seafood restaurant for some lobster bisque. And then he continued running. Nothing could stop him now.

Well, nothing that is, except for a collision with one Marjorie Louise Sprankle.

Chapter 24:

Freaky Friday

It was as mysterious as an episode of the Twilight Zone. Marjorie Sprankle and Robert Finkle bounced off each other like two opposing magnets. Robert Finkle found himself on the ground rubbing a swollen ankle. Marjorie Sprankle found that a strange dog had glued itself to her stomach. But then Marjorie Sprankle realized something even worse.

“My cankle! It’s gone!” she shouted, hysterically.

Robert Finkle stopped rubbing his ankle for a

moment to lift up his jeans and take at his own leg. “My perfectly sculpted ankle! It’s...it’s become disgusting!”

Marjorie Sprankle looked at Robert Finkle. Her eyes were filled with pure hatred. “You...” she said, “You! You stole my cankle!”

“I stole your what?”

“You stole my cankle!”

Suddenly, the dog glued to Marjorie Sprankle’s stomach barked.

Robert Finkle, the clever (using the word very lightly) man that he was, yelled, “Well you stole my dog! And you glued it to your stomach!”

Marjorie Sprankle glanced downwards, taking a closer look at the creature on her belly. She pushed it. She pulled it. She jumped up and down. That dog was firmly attached.

“Um, uh,” Marjorie Sprankle said, not knowing what to say. “I’m sorry.”

“Well sorry is not going to cut it!” Robert Finkle screamed, getting agitated. “I loved that dog! Loved him like my own son! And you went and superglued him to your stomach! How could you do that to me? What kind of monster are you?”

Marcie barked again. Her first bark was of fear. But this bark, this bark was a bark of pure pleasure. The truth was finally out, although Marcie, of course, had known it all along. Robert Finkle loves me.

Chapter 25:

Things get worse

Marjorie Sprankle and Robert Finkle continued quibbling and quarreling. Every once and a while Marcie threw in a bark. Never had she been so happy. Marjorie and Robert, however, were not having a very pleasurable time. In fact, one might say they were having a quite unpleasurable time. One might be speaking ungrammatically incorrectly, but plot-wise, quite correctly

Of course, things were about to get worse. And I’m not even talking just a little bit worse. I’m talking a lot worse. Yes I’m talking quite a lot worse.

Chapter 26:

A Shamelessly Meta Aside

Sometimes writers write novels with each other, tag-team style. Sometimes they say, “Hey, you write a thousand words, and I’ll write a thousand words, and we’ll keep going like that.” But a thousand words are a lot of words. And sometimes a writer just runs out of things to say, so they have to say how much worse things were getting over and over again. And I’m not talking just once or twice. I’m talking over and over again. Yes, I’m talking over and over again.

But hey, writing a novel is hard work. Not just a little hard. But a lot hard. Really, heally hard. Yes, really, really hard.

Dan, the writer, realized he was babbling on, and he realized that his readers would probably realize that he was just milking this silly gimmick to use up words. The game was over. The jig was up. The con exposed. The wool over the eyes taken off. The sham un-shammed. And so he decided to continue the story. But in a round-about way, of course. Those thousand words aren’t just going to right themselves, you know.

Chapter 27:

A Much-Needed Lesson in the Suspension of Disbelief

The physics of how a basset hound remains stuck around one’s waist against her own free will may elude one. But one need not worry oneself with silly things like physics. ‘Tis a trifling matter. One need only suspend one’s disbelief. One did it with those Harry Potter books, right? Or did one really believe that there’s a magical world hidden in the shadows? Of course. One is completely right. It’s right between Middle-Earth and Narnia, just south of Santa’s workshop. No, one knows these places do not exist, but one enjoys reading about them anyway. Because it’s fun for one to do. Why wouldn’t one want a little magic in one’s life?

So listen, one. One only needs to accept the fact

that Marcie the basset hound was indeed attached, somehow, to the waist of Marjorie Louise Sprinkle in what would be known as the Hound-Cankle Switcheroo (soon to be adapted into a film starring Peter O’Toole, Queen Latifah, and Lindsay Lohan, with Quentin Tarantino directing).

Marcie was not thrilled about this turn of events. She didn’t know this strange woman who smelled oddly of assorted vegetables and denture adhesives. She didn’t want to. She certainly didn’t want to be attached to her. But she had only one thought in her walnut-sized brain.

He loves me. He really loves me.

But would she and Walter live happily ever after? Decidedly not. (And I say “decidedly” because I just decided it. Okay, one? You got a problem with that, one?)

Chapter 28:

Today’s Crazy Bitch

As Mortimer Finkle finished a rep of Philbin Phunky Phush-Ups, he was unaware that a neighbor of his was spying on him from outside the window—a Peeping Tom, if you will. (And you should. Why wouldn’t you?) But her name wasn’t Tom. Her name was Meredith. Meredith Viera.

When she couldn’t take it anymore, Meredith burst in through Mortimer’s front door, much to his surprise.

“Dammit, Finkle!” she said. “What is so damn special about Philbin? You’d think that he sweats liquid gold or something. Well, he does, but that’s beside the point!”

“I’m sorry,” Mortimer stammered. “Who are you? And how do you know my name?”

Meredith squawked at his ignorance. “You don’t know who I am? You don’t recognize this face? I’m Meredith Viera, host of Today and the syndicated daytime version of Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?”

Mortimer scratched his head. “There’s a daytime version? I’ve only seen it during primetime with the Reege as host.”

“The Reege?” Really? Bah! I’ve hosted the show for thousands of episodes. And for what? For my own

neighbors to not recognize me? I mean, I know who you are, Finkle, and you spend your days holed up in here playing pan pipe and trying to align your chakras. You're a nobody! You're not a somebody like me!"

Mortimer didn't know why this Viera woman was standing in his foyer, and he didn't know why she was being such a bitch.

"You'd think that people would at least tune into my shows ever since that *Slumdog* movie came out. You know, I auditioned for that part. Of the love interest, I mean. I would have done a much better than that hag they found. You really didn't recognize me? Wait, hang on, look at me from this angle. Anything? Okay, try this angle. Yeah? No?"

As Mortimer watched Meredith Viera strike one pose after another, he grew concerned. He had the sense he was dealing with a true crazy person.

Chapter 29:

An Unlikely and Untimely Union

Walter McLarkle didn't know what it was that brought his feet to the door of Eleanor Finkle, the wife of his golf buddy. He had never been attracted to her. And even if he had been, and even if he had the social skills to woo her, what would have been the point? After all, what's more valuable: love and passion, or his weekly round of nine holes with his pal Robert?

Maybe it was his heartbreak over losing Marcie. Or maybe it was his overwhelming desire to do to Robert what Robert did to him. Or maybe it was the bit of leek lodged behind Eleanor Finkle's ear.

In any case, he clutched her head in his hands and gave her a big wet one. Maybe too wet. He was a salivator in his old age. But that's neither here nor there.

Maybe it was the remaining thrill from squirting eclair cream into that woman's hair. Maybe it was the adrenaline left over from the War of Legumes, as it would be called. (Look for the film adaptation starring Johnny Depp and Mo'Nique, coming soon to theaters.) Or maybe it was the last disgusting whiffs of lobster bisque permeating throughout the house. In any case, Eleanor Finkle gave in to his kiss, and soon they were finding their

way to the bedroom for a night of (nasty old-person) romance.

Chapter 30:

Bullshit

Sometimes writers write novels with each other, tag-team style. Sometimes they say, "Hey, you write a thousand words, and I'll write a thousand words, and we'll keep going like that." And sometimes one person in the team will decide it's a-ok to leave the other person on the team with metafiction and an old-person sex scene to write. This person will think nothing of adding himself into the story even though his last name most certainly does not end with the letters -nkle. He will think nothing of adding Meredith Viera as a CHARACTER just because he is secretly in love with her and keeps her autograph under his pillow at night. Yes, sometimes one member of the team will demolish the quality of a novel because his love of Meredith Viera is more important to him than well-written prose.

Of course, sometimes the other member of the team will be just as bad. Maybe she is so outraged at the idea of Walter McLarkle and Eleanor Finkle doing it that she just momentarily loses her temper. Or maybe it's the recent, terrible news of Dollhouse's inevitable cancellation. But Aly, the writer, is not pleased at the moment.

Aly, however, realizes the importance of this novel. Fifty thousand words in less than 30 days (as we started writing around day 3) is an impressive feat and something to be bragged about. More importantly, having an entire novel published in the Omen will be humorous to us. But most importantly, Marjorie Sprankle needs her story to be heard. And if that means writing bullshit, then bullshit it up, man.

Chapter 31:

A True Crazy Person

Meredith Viera was on vacation in Bora Bora. The woman striking poses in Mortimer Pinkle's foyer was not

Meredith Viera. No, this woman was Lucille Zinkle, a true crazy person.

Lucille Zinkle was Meredith Viera's biggest and most loyal fan. She bragged to have watched every single episode of *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire* hosted by Viera, and not a single one hosted by Regis. Most people saw right through this statement as a lie. Not a single episode with Regis? They questioned. But Lucille Zinkle stayed true to her statement. She has never seen a single episode with Regis. Only the ones with Meredith Viera.

Lucille Zinkle collected Meredith Viera's items. Her glasses. Her underwear. Her used paper cups. Her belly button lint. Her furniture. Her Scrabble scores. Lucille Zinkle's life was devoted to Meredith Viera.

At first nobody thought Lucille Zinkle was crazy. Everyone goes through their phases, they said. Everyone gets a little star struck, they remarked. Everyone does their fair bit of stalking, they stated. But then, one day, it went too far. That day was known forevermore as the day of the The Incident.

Chapter 32:

The Chapter semi plagiarized from an excerpt of an erotica novel featured in an issue of *Cosmopolitan* magazine.

Robert McLarkle held Eleanor Finkle's face in his hands as his mouth came down on hers. His lips were surprisingly soft, Eleanor Finkle thought, as when she had looked at them moments earlier they seemed to be extremely chapped. He must keep chapstick in his pocket, she figured. Oh, and she expected them to be hard. He was a tough person who refused to take anyone's crap. (Literally. There had been feces thrown, and Robert McLarkle was not one to catch flying excrement.)

But Robert McLarkle was hard in other ways (Like his penis!) Even through her clothes, now soaked (eww!), Eleanor Finkle could feel the length of his member (haha! Member!)

Robert McLarkle let go of Eleanor Finkle's mouth, moved his hands to the hem of her shirt, and pulled it

over her head. There was a moment of awkwardness when it sort of got stuck around her head. They both had to pull and Eleanor went on a bit of a rant about how shirt sizes aren't like they used to be. But in the end Eleanor Finkle stepped out of her sensible shoes and onto the futon while Robert McLarkle struggled to help Eleanor shimmy out of her sensible pants.

Robert McLarkle struggled even more to unhook Eleanor Finkle's bra. This wasn't entirely because he had little practice unhooking bras, although that was part of it. No, Eleanor Finkle wore a special kind of bra. A bra that not just anyone could infiltrate.

"Molly," she said, addressing her bra. "Permission to enter?" There was a pause, and then her bra nodded.

"Woot!" Eleanor shouted, and Molly's clasps opened up immediately.

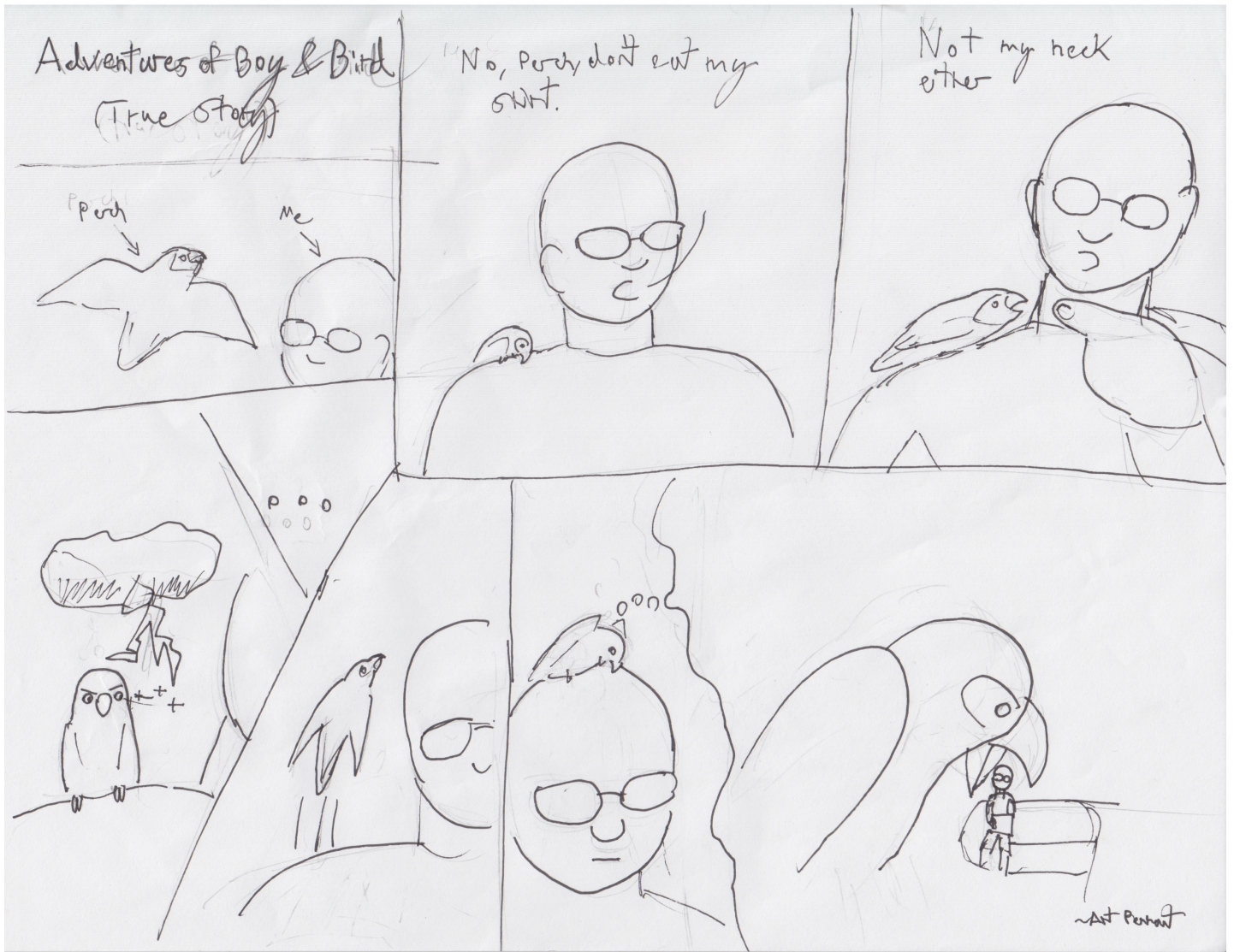
Eleanor Finkle's breasts fell into Robert McLarkle's awestruck hands. When he dipped his head and took his nipples into his mouth (not knowing how the hell he knew what to do), Eleanor Finkle grasped onto the wall (above the futon.) The pull of his lips, his teeth, the heat of his tongue, the late-afternoon breeze, the memory of the ecairs, all the ass-shaking exercise, the vegetable attack...it was all so much, she found herself breathless.

She coughed. She motioned desperately at Robert McLarkle that she couldn't breathe. Her fingers slid from his biceps to his elbows as she desperately tried to get his attention, but all he did was shiver and moan. Robert McLarkle, with a burst of courage, dropped to his knees and slipped his fingers beneath her sensible underpants, pulling them to the ground. In a final desperate attempt, Eleanor Finkle began hitting Robert repeatedly on the arm, but Robert McLarkle could only see this as a sign to keep going. He settled his mouth over her, stroking her most sensitive spot. Unfortunately, Eleanor Finkle could not feel any amount of pleasure Robert McLarkle might have been able to give her, no matter how sensitive her most sensitive spot was. No, Robert McLarkle wasn't gettin' any tonight. Eleanor Finkle was dead.

The end.



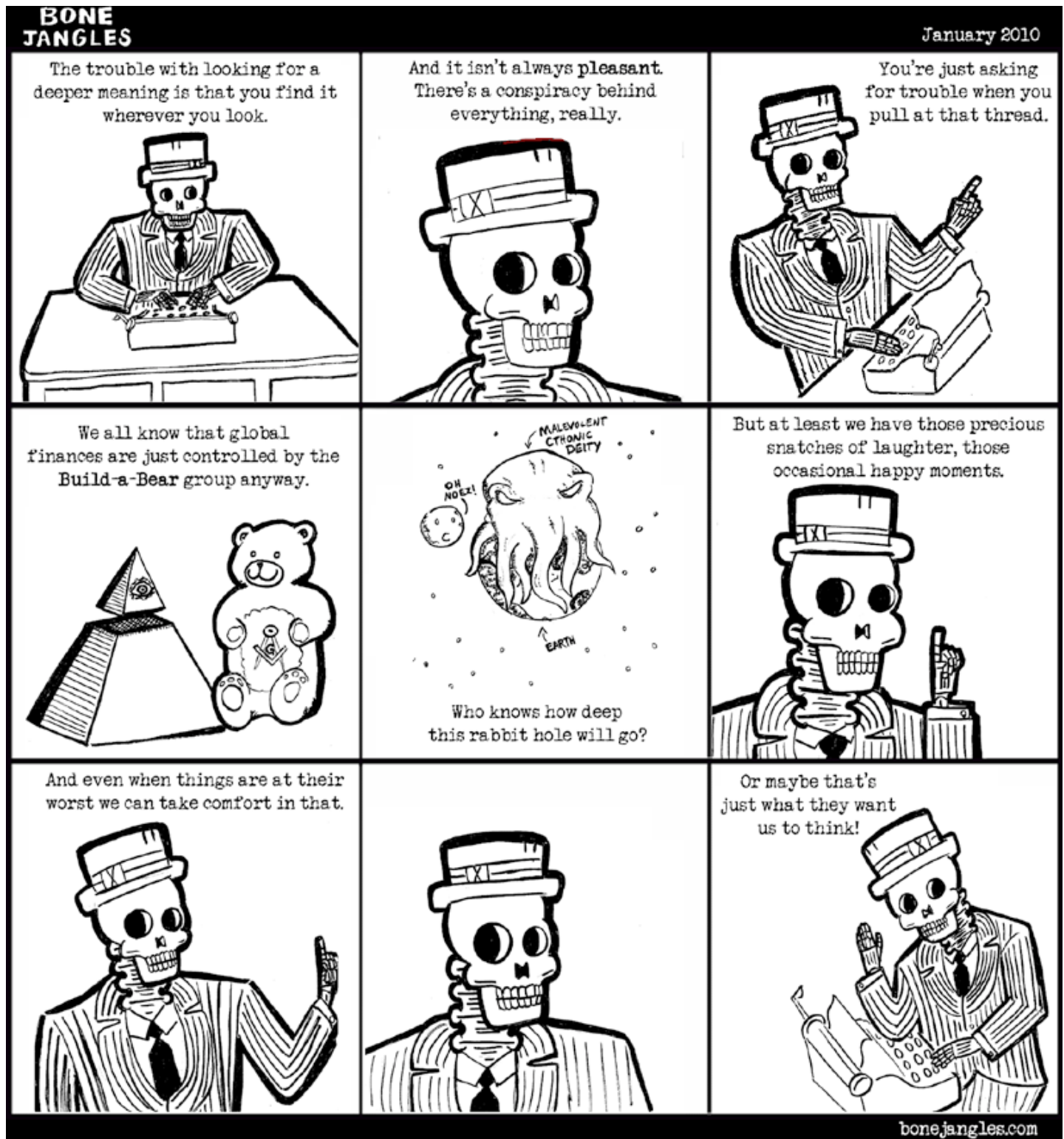
Some Comics



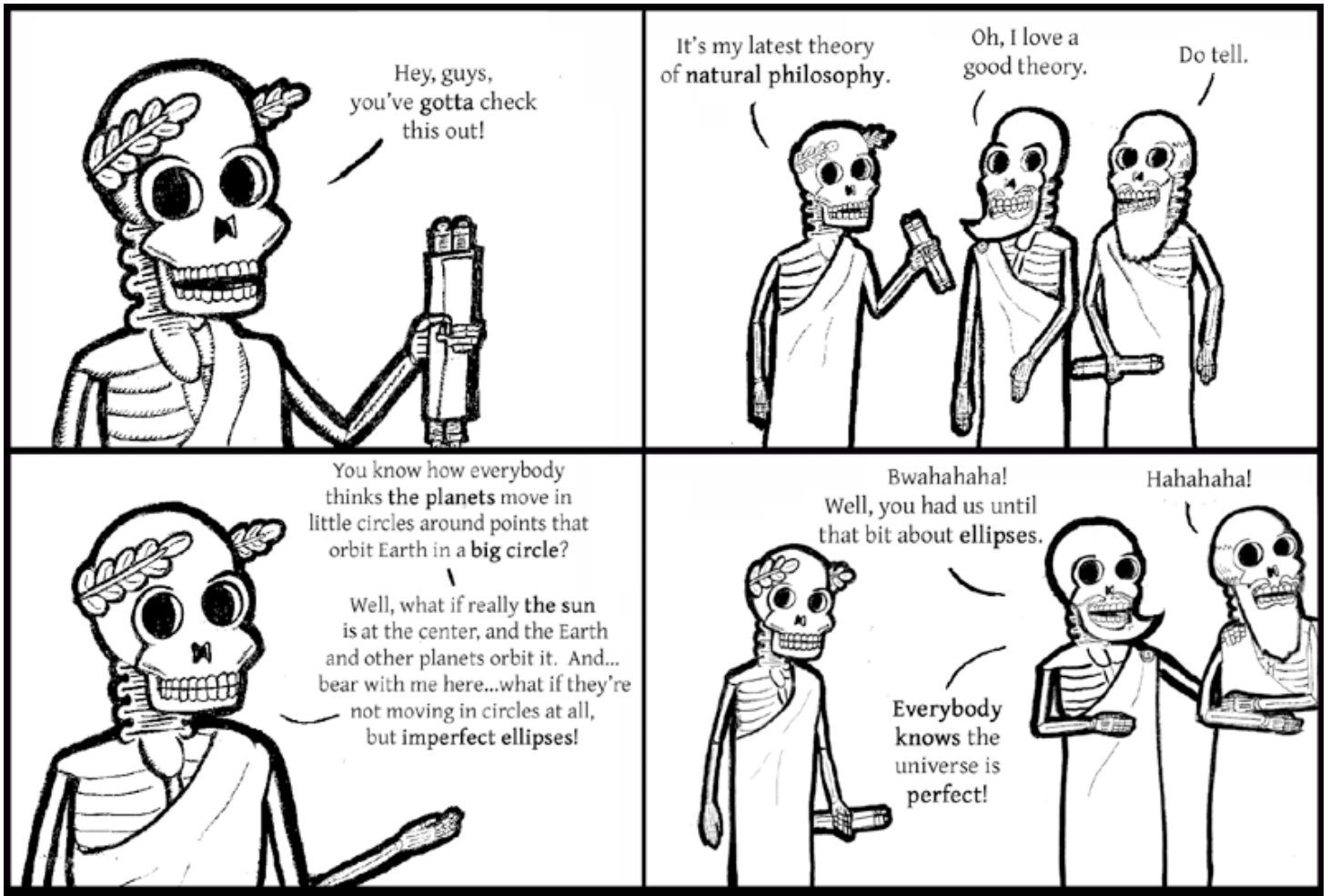
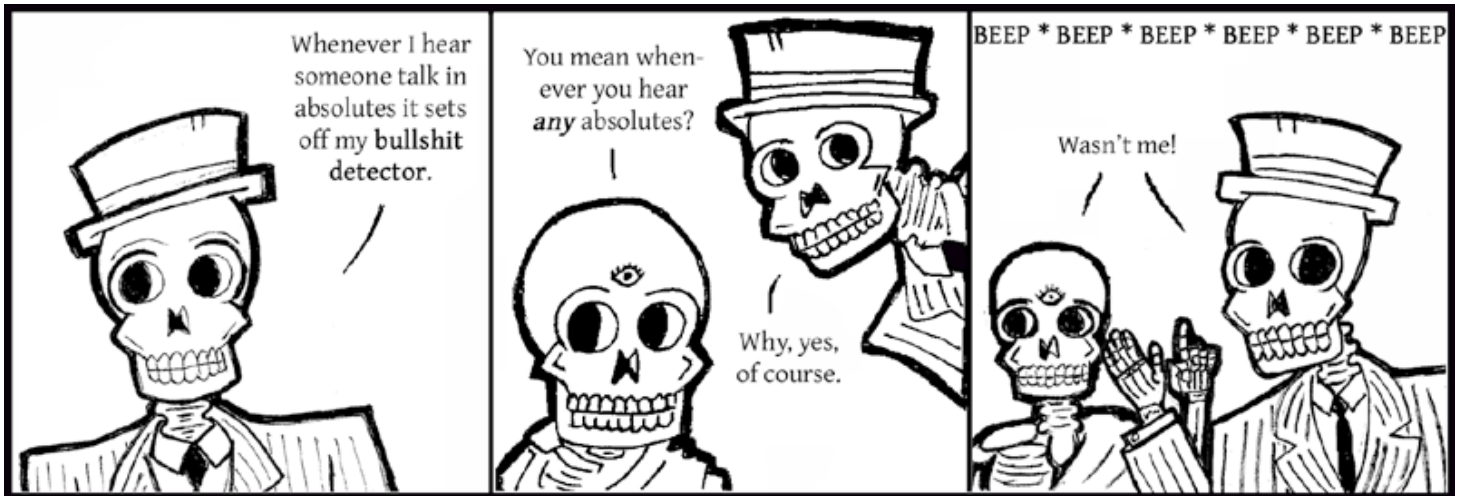


by Arthur Pennant
(Luke Kindl Pinette)

Some More Comics



I'm not sure why Stephen submitted these things he didn't create but here they are so I'm not super concerned. Enjoy this stuff from the internet!



submitted by Stephen Morton

LOLWUT?



Was this your reaction

to [REDACTED]
Hampshire?

The Omen

[REDACTED] would like to know!

rants

Come to [REDACTED] layout!

Share your [REDACTED] and
learn more about [REDACTED]
inane shit
(generally).

8:00

Merrill A basement

[REDACTED] PM [REDACTED]

alternate Fridays
(usually)

[REDACTED]